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OBSERVATIONS ON
THE CHIEU HOI PROGRAM

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FOREWORD

This report is one of a series of Rand studies that examine the organization, operations, motivation, and morale of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces that fought in South Vietnam.

Between August 1964 and December 1968 The Rand Corporation conducted approximately 2400 interviews with Vietnamese who were familiar with the activities of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army. Reports of those interviews, totaling some 62,000 pages, were reviewed and released to the public in June 1972. They can be obtained from the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce.

The release of the interviews has made possible the declassification and release of some of the classified Rand reports derived from them. To remain consistent with the policy followed in reviewing the interviews, information that could lead to the identification of individual interviewees was deleted, along with a few specific references to sources that remain classified. In most cases, it was necessary to drop or to change only a word or two, and in some cases, a footnote. The meaning of a sentence or the intent of the author was not altered.

The reports contain information and interpretations relating to issues that are still being debated. It should be pointed out that there was substantive disagreement among the Rand researchers involved in Vietnam research at the time, and contrary points of view with totally different implications for U.S. operations can be found in the reports. This internal debate mirrored the debate that was then current throughout the nation.

A complete list of the Rand reports that have been released to the public is contained in the bibliography that follows.

(CRC, BJ: May 1975)

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PREFACE

The author of this Memorandum, a consultant to RAND's Social Science Department and professor of political science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, visited Vietnam in July 1965 under the sponsorship of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Concerned, in particular, with the operation of the Chieu Hoi ("Open Arms") Program of the South Vietnamese government, he visited a number of the provincial reception centers and talked to their American and Vietnamese administrators both at the local level and in Saigon.

This Memorandum sums up such observations, conclusions, and recommendations as the author feels qualified to present on the basis of a two-week stay in Vietnam in July 1965. It should be pointed out that this Memorandum does not take into account any changes that may have occurred within the Chieu Hoi program since last summer, and it should be recognized that some of the findings presented herein may have been superseded by intervening events. The views expressed are entirely the author's own. They have been transmitted informally to members of the White House staff, to representatives of the State Department, to ISA personnel, and to the PROVN Study Group in the Department of Defense.

Earlier RAND studies dealing with the problems of motivation, morale, and political control in Vietnam include:

1. Viet Cong Motivation and Morale: A Preliminary Report, by J. C. Donnell, G. J. Pauker, and J. J. Zasloff, RM-4507-ISA, March 1965.
2. Some Impressions of Viet Cong Vulnerabilities: An Interim Report, by L. Gouré and C. A. H. Thomson, RM-4699-1-ISA/ARPA, August 1965.

A closely related study is: Viet Cong Motivation and Morale: The Special Case of Chieu Hoi, by J. C. Carrier and C. A. H. Thomson, RM-4830-1-ISA/ARPA, May 1966.

SUMMARY

The Chieu Hoi ("Open Arms") Program was initiated in early 1963 to induce Viet Cong followers to return to the government's side and rejoin the open society of Vietnam. Launched by Diem with striking initial success, the program as continued by Diem's successors has been very uneven. The numbers of Quy Chanh ("ralliers") that it attracts -- a total of about 21,000 by the summer of 1965 -- vary greatly from place to place and from one time period to another. These fluctuations apparently reflect such diverse factors as the military situation of the moment, changes in the central political leadership, and the interest and efficiency of provincial Program administrators.

Although Chieu Hoi has proved its potential, it has thus far fallen short of its promise and design. In the author's view, there are several major reasons for the present deficiencies, and they are largely interrelated. The government has failed thus far to create a philosophical and long-range political foundation on which a project for the rehabilitation of former enemies might be geared to plans for the country's social and economic reconstruction after the war. Administrative support from Saigon has been indecisive, and the recent downgrading of Chieu Hoi from a separate ministry to a directorate within another ministry has further detracted from its status and visibility. In the allocation of scarce manpower, Chieu Hoi has been unable to command the skilled personnel necessary to conduct such a program most effectively. Furthermore, despite its firm endorsement

by top American policymakers, the program has suffered from lack of concrete evidence that the United States is as seriously committed to it as to other efforts of the government. For American support has tended to be limited to supplying materials for the building of reception centers. Finally, one of the basic difficulties, as the author sees it, lies in the uncertainty and dissension within Vietnamese circles as to what constitutes the appropriate attitude to adopt toward those who have rebelled against their government -- an as yet unresolved problem that is manifest also in the ill-defined status of Viet Cong prisoners.

The Memorandum offers suggestions for correcting some of these basic weaknesses and developing Chieu Hoi into a constructive political and psychological warfare program, not merely a device for drawing manpower away from the Viet Cong. Strong and consistent American support of the program, including a substantial investment of American personnel in its administration, is thought essential, and likely to compel the GVN to face up to some of the long-range issues involved in it. As a first step toward a broad policy approach, the program must be placed in the larger context of all efforts aimed at dealing with civilian refugees and Viet Cong prisoners of war. The author proposes that clear and firm distinctions be drawn among the various categories of defectors, and that punishments, rewards, and opportunities be well defined and publicized, both to guide the potential rallier as he weighs his decision to defect in the light of what awaits him, and to reassure the South Vietnamese that former enemies are not being offered

privileges equal to or greater than those open to loyal government supporters. Thus, a comprehensive defector program might distinguish basically among four categories: refugees, marginal Quy Chanh, activist Quy Chanh, and Viet Cong prisoners. Under separate headings, the author discusses ways in which each group might be treated and used, considering such various aspects of the problem as inducement to defect, acceptability to the rest of the population, benefit to the war effort, and postwar national development. Weighing the opportunities for infiltration that such a program affords against the danger of not utilizing available talent, he deals at particular length with the "activist" Quy Chanh, who are apt to be intelligent and ambitious, and with possibilities for rendering them (and conceivably also some carefully screened Viet Cong prisoners of war) useful to the government in its pursuit of the war, either as fighters or as propagandists.

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I. THE BACKGROUND

Early in 1963, the Diem government initiated the Chieu Hoi -- or "Open Arms" -- Program, designed to induce Viet Cong followers to change their political allegiance and rejoin the open society. By mid-1965, approximately twenty-one thousand Quy Chanh (the Vietnamese word meaning "ralliers") had been brought back to the government side through this program. As we shall be noting, the response to the program has varied from area to area and from one period to another. Moreover, in the absence of a well-defined philosophy, considerations of immediate expediency have sometimes prevailed over those tied to long-range goals for the development of South Vietnamese society. Throughout, the concept behind the program has been the relatively simple one of persuading people who, for whatever reasons, have been supporting the Viet Cong, to return to the government's side; in other words, the main focus has been on the objective of reducing Viet Cong manpower through a particular form of psychological warfare. A secondary aim has been to rehabilitate the ralliers by teaching them needed skills that would enable them to make a better living than heretofore, but the emphasis on this aspect of the program has varied considerably.

In the first few months of its existence, the Chieu Hoi Program seemed strikingly successful, although, as J. C. Carrier and C.A.H. Thomson point out in their study of the motivation and morale of ralliers, these

initial figures must be read with care.¹ Any defector program was bound to tap a reservoir of people who already were anxious to withdraw from the war, but who were in grave doubt about the kind of treatment they might receive from the GVN, and who therefore were, in a sense, merely waiting for the initiation of such a program. Also, given the Diem regime's eagerness to put the most favorable light on its programs, reporting may not have been entirely accurate. It is true, moreover, that the regime had placed some of its most capable and energetic administrators in command of the effort; perhaps at no time since has the program had such strong governmental backing.

Since those early months, the numbers of those who report to the rallying centers have gone up and down. Carrier and Thomson's very careful analysis of the data shows that there has, in fact, been a close correlation between the monthly figure for ralliers and the general political conditions in South Vietnam. When the Saigon government has appeared strong and stable, the flow has been high, but with each disruption there has been a sharp falling off in the number of Quy Chanh. Even more significant is the correlation between the program and the military situation, for the flow of Quy Chanh would seem to be a remarkably sensitive indicator of developments in the war. During the spring and summer of 1965,

¹J. C. Carrier and C. A. H. Thomson, Viet Cong Motivation and Morale: The Special Case of Chieu Hoi, RM-4830-2-ISA/ARPA, December 1966.

for example, when American officials were forecasting major Viet Cong operations, the sharp rise in the number of Quy Chanh suggested that the Communists were having difficulty in organizing their campaigns.

In terms of its administrative support from the Saigon government, the program also has had its ups and downs. During the Diem regime, Chieu Hoi was a separate commissariat directly under the President's office. From February 16 until June 24, 1965, it was an independent ministry. In the military government of Prime Minister Ky, the Chieu Hoi Program appears to have been downgraded; it is now a Directorate within the Ministry of Information and Psychological Warfare, and the former Minister for Chieu Hoi, Tran Van An, has been relieved of his post, though the appointment of a successor within the Ministry of Information and Psychological Warfare has yet to be confirmed.

It is not our purpose here to outline in any detail the concept and the operation of the Chieu Hoi Program. In the following we shall concentrate on some political and policy considerations that go beyond the scope of the Gosho Report, and shall touch only briefly on aspects that are covered exhaustively in that work.

The main feature of the Chieu Hoi Program is the establishment of a reception center in every province, so as to enable the potential rallier to report to a place close to his original home. Chieu Hoi reception centers

have been set up in the majority of the provinces, and are in the process of being built in all others. Each is under the direct control of the province chief.

According to the Chieu Hoi plan, the rallier, upon arriving at a center, is given a chance to collect his wits and receive what medical aid he needs. He then proceeds through an indoctrination course, which tries to convey to him an understanding of the social and political objectives of the Saigon government. Thereafter, the plan calls for the Quy Chanh to be trained in some new craft and thus prepared to become a useful citizen. Once indoctrinated and trained, he can be returned to his home or, if this is impossible, established in another, safe area. In theory, he may also be used to carry on propaganda activities for the GVN or otherwise support the war effort. Indeed, the Quy Chanh is supposed to be given the chance to join the ARVN or other military groups and thus re-enter the battle.

In actual practice, the Chieu Hoi Program has been very uneven. In some provinces it has proceeded more or less as planned; in others, it can hardly be said to have been started. In several cases, reception centers have been built but are neither staffed nor equipped for handling ralliers. There have been serious delays in construction, and, as of July 1965, a number of provinces had only partially completed their centers, while several of those in disuse were in an advanced state of deterioration.

The success of the program in a given province is largely a function of the enthusiasm with which the province chief supports it. At some centers, conditions reportedly have been so bad as to cause ralliers to desert once more and, presumably, return to the Viet Cong. Also, no doubt, many people who are prepared to rally are put off from doing so by their knowledge of such conditions. In many provinces, on the other hand, the program has already demonstrated great potential. The administration of their centers is closely coordinated with the various other propaganda efforts in the province, so that people in the Viet Cong area are made aware of it as a way out of the war and into a more stable civilian existence.

II. THE UNITED STATES COMMITMENT TO CHIEU HOI

With the growing U.S. involvement in Vietnam there has been a very marked increase in American interest in the Chieu Hoi Program. The idea has been strongly endorsed not only by Secretary McNamara and Ambassador Taylor but by President Johnson himself, and their concern about the program has been clearly communicated to the Saigon government. American officials reacted strongly to the downgrading of the Chieu Hoi Ministry, and the Saigon authorities have indicated that they will review their decision and arrive at a firm policy on the Chieu Hoi Program in the near future.

Statements of U.S. policy in favor of the Chieu Hoi Program have not, however, been fully backed up by actions or even by an appreciable increase in American material support. As of the time of writing, only one American is committed to the program on a full-time basis, and he is supporting the Chieu Hoi effort without the help of an American staff. Within the provinces, the USOM Provincial Representatives oversee the Chieu Hoi centers as part of their many responsibilities, but at the very best a USOM Representative can spend only about 20 per cent of his time on advising and providing administrative support to the Chieu Hoi effort.

In the fall of 1964, an American team under John Perry, USOM's full-time Chieu Hoi Program Officer mentioned above, drew up the document which embodies the current basic operating concept of Chieu Hoi. But, until now, the American input into the program has been limited almost entirely to providing the building materials for

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the centers. USOM has been the chosen instrument of American support because it commands the bricks and mortar necessary for the building. The last Director of USOM opposed any suggestion of assigning more American personnel to this project, on the grounds that every effort should be made to build up Vietnamese capabilities rather than involve Americans at the operating level of programs.

It is not unlikely that some Saigon officials wonder about the seriousness of the American interest in the Chieu Hoi Program, given the fact that the United States has invested so little in it as compared with other programs in which it has an interest.

III. GVN ATTITUDES TOWARD CHIEU HOI

Unquestionably, the inadequacy of American support with respect to both materials and personnel has been a factor in the very faulty performance of the GVN. Within the Vietnamese government itself, however, the feelings about the Chieu Hoi Program are mixed to a degree and for reasons that cannot be accounted for only as reactions to American words and deeds. This uncertainty about the Chieu Hoi effort may help explain why the Saigon government has yet to obtain official confirmation of a new head for the program, even though a former Vietnamese army captain has been occupying that office.

The most serious reservations are based on the question of how much effort should be devoted to rehabilitating people who have only recently been fighting against the government, a problem to which we shall return presently. Among other arguments advanced in GVN circles in favor of deemphasizing the program is the view -- fortunately not widespread -- that the only good Viet Cong is a dead Viet Cong and that there is little need therefore for psychological warfare and the injection of any political elements into the struggle. Some officials are reluctant also to support a program so closely identified with the Diem regime. (The suggestion has even been made that a change in the name of the program might give it a greater degree of respectability.) Among military commanders, there is a tendency not to distinguish clearly between Chieu Hoi and the handling of prisoners, which has presented serious problems in some areas, where the commanders have not been able to entrust prisoners to

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the civil authorities with any assurance that they will be jailed. (Province chiefs who lack adequate facilities for dealing with large numbers of prisoners tend to "rehabilitate" them in a remarkably short time, and some commanders, particularly in the I Corps Area, maintain that they have taken the same man prisoner several times.)

It is doubtful that any weight need be given to the suggestion that the name of the program be changed. A different name might encourage a few to rally who at present are hesitating to be associated with a program that suggests their ever having been Viet Cong supporters of their own free will, but this is a marginal consideration, greatly overbalanced by the serious loss of time that would result from having to communicate a whole new program to people in the Viet Cong areas. It is a valid general point, however, that in any effort to expand the Chieu Hoi Program much greater emphasis must be placed on the fact that a large proportion of the Viet Cong truly are victims of circumstance. GVN propaganda should acknowledge the government's sympathy with people who never really wanted to join the Viet Cong, or who joined for other than political reasons, and with those who in their locality simply felt caught up in overpowering forces. The problem of the treatment of prisoners, it should be noted in passing, has some basis in fact. Strangely enough, the basic struggle in Vietnam has never been legally defined, and until the recent imposition of martial law by the present military government, the status of the Viet Cong under the law was ambiguous; there was no legal basis for holding a Viet Cong prisoner since it was not unlawful

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to be a Communist in South Vietnam. Even today, precise punishments for treating with the Viet Cong or joining their organization have not yet been clearly laid down.

The problem of inadequate facilities for the handling of prisoners does come close to another, very serious objection that some Vietnamese officials raise to the continuance and expansion of the Chieu Hoi Program. The GVN, they argue, because of the competing demands on its resources, does not have the skilled manpower necessary to carry through a major program in this area, and the scarce available talent can be used more efficiently in running the normal administrative organs. With men of top quality needed in many places, so the argument goes, the best should be reserved for the support of the civilian economy, and this would leave only low-caliber people to work with the ralliers. The validity of this last statement is partly borne out by the situation at existing Chieu Hoi centers, where local cadres are paid at the pathetically low rate of VN\$ 1,100 a month, of which VN\$ 900 alone go for food. Clearly, it is impossible to recruit people of talent at these salaries; but it is not at all certain that abler men would be available even if salaries were raised.

The Saigon leadership recognizes that it must search for more talent, and there seems to be a tendency to give greater authority to the younger men who, in more normal times, would be thought to be lacking in stature for the work they are doing. Indeed, the Ky government may have been responding to the manpower problem in this way when it first thought of appointing as head of the Chieu Hoi Program the young army captain mentioned

earlier. His youth and relatively low rank, in turn, may account for the continued uncertainty of his status.³

All of the foregoing objections, however, are probably trivial in comparison to an unarticulated but deep-seated uneasiness about the meaning of the Chieu Hoi Program. This concerns the fundamental philosophical and political issue of how a government should treat citizens who have been in revolt against it. Historically, we have no example of a civil war in which a government has been particularly skillful in reestablishing relations with the former rebels (the American record, for one, is not outstanding). Nor is it possible for a government, in the heat of battle and conflict, to promise to treat like the prodigal son everyone who ceases to oppose it; the many assassinations and acts of brutality on the part of the Viet Cong rule out any such blanket promise of clemency. Thus, the GVN in its policy and propaganda must balance very carefully

³Although hard evidence to that effect is lacking, the young captain may be a member of an inner circle of officers and civilians who are running the Saigon government from behind the scenes. Certainly, he must have had considerable political influence in order to be released from the army and become heir apparent to the position of Chieu Hoi head. His failure to be as yet fully established in the post may mean that he does not have quite enough political backing; alternatively, it suggests that the Americans may have felt that the post ought to be given to a man of higher status, and that this reaction has upset the plans of the inner group. Whatever the facts of this particular case, however, the shortage of skilled and authoritative manpower has unquestionably hurt the Chieu Hoi Program.

between effectively publicizing the Chieu Hoi Program and creating resentment among its own soldiers and civilian supporters at the opportunities offered the former Viet Cong.

The problem of developing a comprehensive defector program is further complicated by the fact that, from a political point of view, the Quy Chanh represent a very large variety of people. Many were pressed into Viet Cong service; some joined in search of adventure; for some it promised simply a means of livelihood. Among those with ideological reasons, some had passed briefly through a phase of enthusiasm, while others were dedicated revolutionaries. There are also the criminals in political garb, and finally, there are the North Vietnamese ralliers. Where it comes to this last group, the Chieu Hoi Program clearly touches on the larger political issue of national reunification.

What is needed is a carefully considered program which does not rest merely on expediency but looks forward to the day when the country will be trying to heal its wounds. Given the current military situation it may be somewhat unrealistic to expect government officials to spend time trying to work out long-run programs. The first requirement toward that end, however, would be to establish a consensus on what ought to be the goals of the government's long-run economic and political and social development. There are indications that the inner group in the present Saigon government is in fact grappling with precisely this problem, but the pressure of military events is likely to prevent them from arriving at any definitive conclusions on questions of ideology in the near future.

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Still, the very fact that the Chieu Hoi Program touches on both immediate and long-run issues means that it could serve as an entering wedge which, in time, might compel the government to articulate a fundamental philosophy about the future of the country. In other words, American pressure in support of the Chieu Hoi Program might leave the Saigon authorities no choice but to face up sooner than they would otherwise have done to some basic issues that are of great importance for the long-range development of the country. This could only happen, however, if the American approach itself clearly went beyond considerations of practical expediency and administrative detail.

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IV. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A brief visitor to the Vietnam scene must be very cautious and humble in making substantive suggestions on matters of policy, particularly as regards the details of administering programs such as the Chieu Hoi. The visitor to various centers cannot help but come away with impressions, and it would be quite easy for him to suggest numerous simple improvements by which to strengthen the effort. In the following, I shall try to ignore these problems and to deal mainly with questions of general policy.

My basic recommendation for the future of the Chieu Hoi Program concerns the need for a much stronger input of intellectual, political, and long-range concepts. For I doubt whether the United States can hope to strengthen the program substantially if it continues to deal mainly with the "bricks and mortar" side of Chieu Hoi. The USOM effort unquestionably needs greater backing than it has received in the past, and USOM will certainly be able to provide greater support for Chieu Hoi once the necessary policy decisions are made, as hopefully they will be with the appointment of a new mission director. But these long-overdue improvements in USOM operations can only be a partial answer to what should be the total United States effort. Of great importance now is some hard and imaginative American thinking on how to make Chieu Hoi a much more positive political and psychological warfare program and the basis for healing the wounds of civil war.

An urgent need has been the designation of an American official who would be fully concerned with the

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political policy aspects of Chieu Hoi. He could be teamed up with the USOM director of Chieu Hoi, whose duties would remain, as in the past, with the administrative and material support of the program. It would be inappropriate to attach the new official to USOM or MACV or JUSPAO, since his concerns would be political, not technical. If he were placed in the Ambassador's office, on the other hand, he would be able to communicate directly with an opposite number in the Prime Minister's office. Given such a direct connection between the Prime Minister's office and the American concerned with the policy aspects of Chieu Hoi, the question whether the Chieu Hoi Program became a separate ministry or commissariat or remained a directorate within the Ministry of Information and Psychological Warfare would be less urgent.⁴ Also, if such an official were located in the Ambassador's office, he would sit on the Mission Council and thus be in direct contact with all the U.S. agencies which can contribute to the effort. The need for such a directing hand will become the more important as attention to the problems of pacification and rural development increases.

As a first step toward arriving at an appropriately broad policy approach to Chieu Hoi, it is necessary to conceive of the program in the larger context of other

⁴The case for a separate ministry nevertheless remains strong, mainly because of the need to give the Chieu Hoi Program a high degree of visibility in the country and to make it something more than just a psychological warfare gimmick.

efforts aimed at dealing with civilian refugees on the one hand and the VC prisoners of war on the other. The over-all concern should be to reintegrate not only a few isolated defectors but large segments of the Vietnamese people into a well-functioning society, and to do so along lines that will contribute to the effective prosecution of the war and at the same time help lay the foundation for the long-range development of Vietnam in peacetime.

Such an effort must begin with a clear redefinition of the categories of people who would be covered by an "open arms" program. Under the present terms, the Quy Chanh may be anyone from a refugee from rebel-held territory to a man who has long been a Communist and has been deeply involved in the Viet Cong apparatus. The need is for a discriminating program which, under the general label of Chieu Hoi, will treat different types of people in different fashion. As a start, we would suggest that there are at present four main categories of people who could be so identified and for whom explicit policies should be established. They are the refugees, the marginal ralliers, the activists among the Quy Chanh, and the Viet Cong prisoners.

1. REFUGEES

As yet, no governmental program has been developed to deal effectively with the serious refugee problem in Vietnam. Since such an effort will soon have to be made in view of the increased tempo of the fighting, it would be appropriate to have this closely tied in with the Chieu Hoi Program. Linking refugees and Chieu Hoi would not only be a matter of administrative convenience but

could have the advantage of strengthening psychological and political warfare. Many people, for instance, whose involvement with the Viet Cong has been only marginal, resent being identified as "former Communists"; they might be more willing to come out and declare their allegiance to the GVN if they could do so in the spirit of "refugees from Viet Cong terrorism," and a well-defined refugee program might make this possible. It would, of course, be necessary to screen the refugees and try to spot among them those who more properly belonged in other categories.

A national policy on the treatment of refugees could also be the start of an ideological campaign for the rebuilding of Vietnam, as the refugees provided with security and opportunities for gainful employment would furnish a demonstration of the South Vietnamese government's willingness and ability to create a peaceful and loyal society.

The fact that the vast majority of the refugees consists of women and dependent children, and that among the few men the bulk are elderly and only marginally employable, adds to the difficulty of devising programs that will make the refugees economically self-sufficient. At the same time, women are particularly important for psychological warfare: although most of them may deny any knowledge of the whereabouts of their menfolk, it is not unlikely that over time they will show great ingenuity in communicating quickly with them and, if conditions are right, encouraging them to come out and start a new life. Substantial efforts should be made to inform such refugees about the larger Chieu Hoi Program, and to convince them that some women's husbands are on to a good thing.

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In this context, it is well to remember also that family ties and the demands of filial piety are still exceedingly strong in Vietnam. Psychological warfare therefore should play on the anxieties of Vietnamese sons on the score of obeying the wishes of their fathers.

2. THE RALLIER OR MARGINAL QUY CHANH

This category might appropriately include people who were directly involved with the Viet Cong but failed to achieve status, and who have little technical skill or other knowledge relevant to either military or political aspects of the conflict. Most of the Quy Chanh at present fall into this category. Many of them are simple peasants with relatively little capacity for developing new skills. Their involvement with the Viet Cong was marginal, and they probably will happily and contentedly remain peasants in any future society.

The program for this category should be to interrogate these people for whatever intelligence they may have to offer, and then quickly work out ways of allowing them once again to become productive peasants. This might mean sending them back to their homes in cases where the pacification program has reached their areas. In other cases they could be mixed with the refugees and treated in very much the same fashion. Most of these people are essentially unpolitical and eager only for security and a peaceful existence. It is toward this group that the government can adopt the generous and sympathetic posture of father of prodigal sons, or, more appropriately, of unfortunate sons.

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3. THE ACTIVIST QUY CHANH

Different treatment must be provided for people who have been more deeply involved with the Viet Cong and for those who have greater skills and natural abilities. The Viet Cong have been generally adept at recruiting the most intelligent and able of their followers for positions of responsibility within their organization, and most of the better-educated Quy Chanh, therefore, tend to have a good knowledge of communism and considerable experience in military operations. Once they have changed their loyalties, they can be expected to perform a host of very useful tasks in support of the government's war effort.

The treatment of these activist Quy Chanh should begin with interrogations designed to determine their knowledge of Viet Cong behavior and their skills in political and military warfare. The next step should be to develop an imaginative and dynamic program that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the GVN. This would require some degree of political indoctrination, but the program should not have strong ideological overtones. Given the chance to demonstrate their full capabilities in political propaganda and military affairs, these people are likely to respond to trust and responsibility by becoming very useful citizens. Many of them, having long sought a greater level of political and cultural involvement than is normally attainable to simple peasants, were attracted to the Viet Cong largely because they wanted an active political or military life. If South Vietnam offers them comparable opportunities for advancing themselves and for participating

in the political process, there is little question that the vast majority will become loyal members of society.

It would be important to devise several different kinds of programs for which these people could be recruited once they had gone through the interrogation and indoctrination. Such programs might include the following:

A. Propaganda and Psychological Warfare

Not a few of the ex-Viet Cong are interested in the art of political propaganda, and they enjoy performing in front of audiences. It would be highly desirable in South Vietnam not only to build up the armed propaganda teams that go out into the countryside to counter the Viet Cong propaganda effort, but also to develop programs addressed to the general civilian population in the GVN-controlled towns and cities. Thus, some Quy Chanh should be organized to "tell their story" to the people in Saigon and the other urban centers. By explaining to the civilian population what communism is, and doing it in very human terms, they could bring the meaning of the whole war effort closer to home. At present, civilians in the government-controlled cities are strangely lacking in information about the nature of the Viet Cong and about conditions in Viet Cong territories. Though GVN propaganda speaks about the evils of communism, it is all fairly abstract, and many Vietnamese in Saigon display a startling curiosity about "what the Communists are really like." Not that they are susceptible to communist propaganda; but they are slightly fascinated by the devil and his tricks, and it would be very sensible to exploit this curiosity by having ex-Communists tell their stories and make more vivid the

dangers that exist. The Quy Chanh can speak with a realism that ordinary government propaganda cannot muster.

Such use of Quy Chanh might become the basis for a significant political program affecting the whole country, an answer to the GVN's present concern about how best to conduct its propaganda and indoctrination campaigns aimed at the South Vietnamese populace. A delegation of Vietnamese officials has gone to Taipei to learn what the Chinese Nationalists have done on this score. It should be noted that, during the Emergency in Malaya, many of the ex-Communists who had surrendered worked effectively as propagandists with the government information department and, when the Emergency was over, became regular civil servants. Similarly, many of the more articulate Quy Chanh, if given the chance to work in the propaganda ministry, might well develop skill and experience in this area and, after the war, could become useful instruments of the government in the long-range development of South Vietnam. This would ensure their reintegration with the open society, as the fact of their having once been enemies of the state would no longer be relevant.

B. Guerrilla Warriors

Many of the Quy Chanh, as well as refugees, can, of course, be recruited into the ARVN. The more intelligent of the Quy Chanh could also be organized as guerrillas, either in killer squads or in small bands to counter the guerrilla units of the Viet Cong. It must be recognized that many young people were originally attracted to the Viet Cong by the romance of guerrilla life, and some might be happy to return to it. Such Quy Chanh could

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either go back into the jungle as members of larger armed government squads, or they could function as special squads wearing their old communist uniforms and conducting covert operations. This would be a way of exploiting their considerable experience and skill in guerrilla warfare, as well as their intimate knowledge of the Viet Cong's mentality.

Building up and having readily available mobile squads of Quy Chanh would enable the government to fight the Viet Cong at the guerrilla level if their main forces should fail in their current, major campaign and if the Communists thereupon decided to revert to guerilla activity as the primary form of warfare.

C. Rural Pacification Teams

Activist Quy Chanh with political and administrative skills could be effectively utilized in the government's Rural Pacification Program. They should be integrated into the program's regular personnel, and in time could become fully-established civil servants in the different areas of rural pacification. Specific assignments, of course, would depend upon individual skills and particular interests.

D. Civilian Construction Corps

In addition to attaching Quy Chanh to Rural Pacification teams, it might be useful to mobilize some of them for a civilian construction corps, which would be directed toward the long-range rehabilitation of Vietnam. Inevitably, the government will have to make a substantial effort in such areas as urban rehabilitation, road building, and land reclamation, and some of the many Quy Chanh

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who cannot as yet be resettled in agriculture could be readily diverted to construction work of this kind. Such a program would also have the merit of impressing on its participants and on the populace the prospect that, with the coming of peace, Vietnam will experience a significant development which will greatly improve both rural and urban life.

E. Civilian Administration

It is even possible that some of the more intelligent Quy Chanh could be assigned to ordinary duties in civil administration at the province or district level. With the present severe manpower shortage, the GVN is in desperate need of talent with which to help the provinces keep up their daily routine. If selected Quy Chanh could be given limited assignments -- first on a probationary basis and, after they had proved their loyalty, in an arrangement that eventually would lead to regular civil service status -- then, by the end of the war, part of the division in Vietnamese society would have been obliterated; on becoming regular civil servants, these people would be helping to rehabilitate and build their country.

F. Administering the Quy Chanh and Refugee Programs

Certainly, many of the Quy Chanh with leadership abilities could be put to work manning the Chieu Hoi rehabilitation centers and administering the programs for reestablishing the refugees. Leaders from among the Quy Chanh can be the more effective as they understand the problems both of the ex-Viet Cong and of refugees seeking security. Again, in cases where the individual

shows considerable talent, it should be possible eventually to make him a regular civil servant and thus part of the normal machinery of government.

An important point in any of the foregoing suggestions is that the Quy Chanh should be given the prospect of a career that is reasonably in keeping with his ability and effort, provided he meets his responsibilities as a citizen. There are no doubt many other places in the country where the intelligent Quy Chanh can be used to advantage. It is important only to bear in mind that many of them became involved in the Viet Cong in the first place because they were highly ambitious and did not want to remain peasants the rest of their lives. Given their uncertain status of defectors, they are bound to be uneasy about the kind of future that lies ahead for them. If entrusted with some degree of responsibility, they are likely to perform well. We should note in this connection that much of the secret of the Viet Cong's success has been their willingness to give responsibility to people who are very imperfectly educated, and to recruit much of the native talent and ingenuity that abound in the Vietnamese countryside. It is important, therefore, when these people defect from the Viet Cong, that they not be faced with the prospect of permanently losing their opportunities for self-advancement, but be given instead the chance to prove their loyalty to the GVN and so rise to positions of increasing responsibility.

Within the Saigon government, no deep sense of bitterness toward the individual Viet Cong is noticeable. Only when a GVN official is confronted with the politically

sensitive issue of whether former Viet Cong should be given equal treatment with loyal supporters of the government is he likely to express strong resentment. In general, however, the GVN official tends to show a high degree of tolerance and understanding in his personal dealings with the individual ex-Viet Cong. Thus, a program that sought to bring the Quy Chanh into the government should not be unacceptable.

4. VIET CONG PRISONERS

Returning to our general categorization of ex-Viet Cong members, we must emphasize the obvious need for a final category, that of the hard-core Viet Cong who is captured against his will and is not prepared to change his loyalties. People like him must be held in jails and stockades, and only if they show a genuine change of heart can they be treated like the other Quy Chanh.

The existing jails in Vietnam go back to the French period, and all of them are shockingly overcrowded today. Within the same enclosure, one may find not only hard-core Viet Cong but defectors, marginal Quy Chanh, former supporters of the Diem regime, and common criminals. These jails are bound to become centers of political unrest if they are allowed to remain so inadequate. The United States, in the light of its experience in Korea, should be especially alert to the importance of planning ahead for the treatment of prisoners of war. Once facilities are improved, we can expect to have more prisoners, because the field commanders will have greater confidence that captured men will be held. At the same time, it is most important to initiate a systematic program for

screening the prisoners and then dramatically rewarding or punishing them according to their political commitment, thereby whittling away gradually at the hard-core group. It is not at all unlikely that, at some point in the future, the United States will be judged essentially by the numbers of Viet Cong prisoners who decide to stay in the south as against those who opt to go to North Vietnam.

Although it is important to have a clear category of prisoners of war, people who have come into government custody involuntarily should have the option to change their minds and eventually qualify for the same treatment as the Quy Chanh, whose change of heart merely occurred a bit earlier. In this sense, whatever categories are employed in a revitalized Chieu Hoi Program need not be absolutely rigid. Yet they should be defined as sharply as possible, so that the nature of the program can be presented to potential defectors with the utmost precision. At present, anyone who is still with the Viet Cong and may be interested in defecting is confronted with considerable uncertainty as to what is likely to be his fate. Though aware that there is such a thing as the Chieu Hoi Program, he has no way of knowing exactly whether he personally would fit the description. Also, he knows that prisoners have been mistreated and that many are jailed, and if he himself has committed crimes, he may fear punishment at the hands of the GVN. The potential defector will think it reasonable for the government to discriminate in its treatment of people like himself; but he will want to know the rules.

During the Malayan Emergency, the British, by a process of trial and error, arrived at two distinct

categories of former Communists: Surrendered Enemy Personnel (SEP) and Captured Enemy Personnel (CEP). The SEPs presumably had surrendered of their own volition and were treated very much in the fashion that we have suggested handling the activist Quy Chanh. The CEPs, on the other hand, were regarded as lawbreakers and brought to trial, and many of them were executed. Whether a man was classified as SEP or CEP depended entirely upon his attitude after he had come into government custody. The conditions under which he came into custody could not be the determinant, because frequently a man would fire his last round of ammunition and then throw up his hands, and it would have been difficult to decide whether this constituted capture or surrender. In practice, therefore, it was the attitude he displayed during the next forty-eight hours that became the basis for classifying him. If he showed that he was prepared to shift his allegiance and cooperate with the government, he qualified as an SEP; if he showed that his heart was still with the Communists and that he resented being held, he was classified as a CEP. In short order, the people in the jungle came to be aware of these two categories and the difference between them, and, if they were at all inclined to defect, could take them into account in making their decision and planning their behavior.

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V. THE POTENTIAL OF A DYNAMIC CHIEU HOI PROGRAM

In revitalizing the Chieu Hoi Program, the government should give high priority to working out definite categories of the kind suggested above, which can be communicated easily to those still on the other side. Once such a program has been designed, much of the GVN's psychological warfare effort can be related to it. For example, the experiences of individual Quy Chanh after returning to the government side can be written up and disseminated in Viet Cong-held areas. And those of the Quy Chanh who still have means of contact with people on the communist side may be encouraged to communicate their particular experience to them directly. To some extent this is already happening, but the effort could be much more significant if it were made part of a larger program.

One possible objection to developing a program for using the Quy Chanh in this manner concerns the dangers of infiltration by the Viet Cong. The Communists, of course, will always try to infiltrate any defector program, and both the initial interrogation and the political indoctrination following it ought to be designed with a view to weeding out the infiltrators. Still more important is it to realize that even those Quy Chanh who enter the program as agents, once they are in positions of responsibility and under reasonably close surveillance, will inevitably have to support the interests of the GVN. In the same way, the British in Malaya compelled the SEPs to act in a manner that could not help but do severe damage to the communist cause, more than offsetting

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thereby whatever the Communists may have gained by efforts at infiltration.

There would seem to be far less danger, then, from infiltration than from underutilization of the political capacities of people who have had a great deal of experience with the Communists. The great majority of the refugees, for example, are people who feel that they can no longer be completely neutral in the conflict and are ready to throw in their lot with the government. Having made that decision, they have acquired a large stake in the outcome of the war, and this fact can become a strong incentive to their supporting the government most vigorously. In short, both the refugees and the marginal Quy Chanh may be seen as positive factors in the building of a political community in South Vietnam.

As the government develops skill and competence in dealing with ralliers and refugees, it is likely thereby to gain confidence also about its handling of the larger issue of how to reintegrate all of Vietnamese society once the military phase has passed. To put it differently, if the government learns how to work with its former enemies while the fighting is going on, it will be the better able to do so once the fighting is over.

To be sure, the Saigon authorities, in approaching the Chieu Hoi Program, are faced with some of the same concerns with which they reflect on the larger problem of how to rebuild their society. But it would seem that a vigorous Chieu Hoi Program could help resolve the very issue that is troubling them. The American position, therefore, ought to be one of sympathy with the Vietnamese dilemma, combined with the reminder that the only way of

resolving such a dilemma is to begin as soon as possible with the gradual reintegration of the divided people.

In the past, the Saigon authorities often received the impression that the American approach to the rehabilitation and training of the Quy Chanh was primarily an effort to enable the rallier to make a better living after the war than before, and government officials were understandably disturbed by the thought that former Viet Cong were to be given such advantages. Once reintegration is based on the direct contribution that the ex-Viet Cong makes to the war effort, the terms of rehabilitation are radically changed, as only those who show themselves willing to make some sacrifices for their country can hope to be fully accepted. Although the Saigon government would not be justified in running a special welfare program for the benefit of its former enemies, it can well defend a policy of using these enemies to help it win the war.

Any dynamic Quy Chanh program would require a strong intellectual input on the part of the United States. To this end, as already suggested, it would be necessary, above all, to have an American official with a staff assigned to the problem, who would have the backing of the Ambassador. By being able to communicate directly with the Prime Minister's office, such an official could put the Quy Chanh program at the very center of the Vietnamese political effort.

For the project to become fully successful, it must be conceived of and presented as more than merely a defector program. Rather, it must be approached as a means by which the South Vietnamese government can

articulate a comprehensive program of national development. If the United States can persuade the government to exploit the intellectual and political content of Chieu Hoi and to look upon it not as a gimmick for undermining the morale of the enemy but as part of a constructive long-range program, it will be encouraging the South Vietnamese authorities to tackle the most creative task in their effort to build a stable nation.